



Dennis M. Walcott, Chancellor

Spring 2011

## Parent-Teacher Conferences 2011-12 Maximizing Potential to Improve Student Progress

To support our students academically in and out of school, administrators, teachers, and families need to have a shared understanding of their children's learning and work as partners to meet their academic and social-emotional needs. As you plan to implement next year's instructional expectations, consider how open school nights and parent-teacher conferences can engage families and help you meet your goals for students. This summer we will be developing resources to help you engage families around the Common Core. Visit the Common Core Library at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/CommonCoreLibrary> to access these resources.

### Maximizing time with Families

- **Structure your open school nights for maximum success.** Organize parent-teacher conferences around advisory or other groupings of students pertinent to your school. Publicize open school nights through fliers and newsletters to promote parent attendance. Where appropriate, include students.
- **Schedule appointments with each student's family.** To reduce traffic and ensure you have enough time to meet with families, schedule appointments in advance. Send reminders to families about their appointments one week prior to meeting. Encourage families to also speak with other school staff, like parent coordinators and guidance counselors.
- **Communicate with families on an ongoing basis.** When you communicate with families throughout the year, remind them of upcoming opportunities to meet with school staff, as well as where to direct their questions and where to go to for help and more information.

### School Opening

- **Welcome families to your school.** Invite families to your school to ask questions and learn how they should escalate concerns, how they can access information outside of school hours, and when they can visit your school. Give parents specific recommendations for how they can support your school's needs and goals this year, through opportunities such as volunteering, fundraising, and parent leadership.
- **Share the goals of the Common Core with families.** Host workshops where families can learn about the Common Core standards and the skills students should master by the end of their current grade. Ask families to try a Common Core task to help them understand changes they will see in the classroom.
- **Provide professional development.** Provide teachers with information about best practices to conduct effective parent-teacher conferences and help staff plan communication with families throughout the school year.

### Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences

- **Make student data accessible.** Help families access data about their children's attendance and performance within ARIS Parent Link and any other systems your school uses. Be prepared to talk about student strengths and growth areas. Schools should consider structuring parent-teacher conferences so that parents and teachers can review information from ARIS Parent Link directly online together, if a computer setup is possible.
- **Provide strategies to families.** Ask teachers to share one strategy with families that they can use at home to help their child meet instructional goals this year.
- **Share your school's plans for implementing the Common Core this year.** Introduce the Common Core and planned assessment changes to families. Prepare them for changes they should see in their child's classroom and homework.

### **Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences**

- **Share student performance on the culminating task with families.** Share student work product on the Common Core-aligned task. Compare that to the student's work used for baseline analysis. Help parents understand their child's strengths and development areas in the work.
- **Share a sample of exemplary student performance.** Show families on-grade-level Common Core-aligned work to help them understand the expectations for higher-quality student work.

### **Open School Week 2011-12**

This year, Open School Week is celebrated from November 13 – 19, 2011. Schools should encourage families to visit classes during this week to observe what is taking place in their child(ren)'s school. This is a critical time to reinforce parent-school relationships that will lead to the dynamic partnerships necessary to ensure the educational success of each student. Schools should provide stimulating programs and conferences, as well as make available materials and exhibits for children and parents that encourage families to visit schools.

The Office for Family Information and Action (OFIA) will conduct trainings with parent coordinators over the summer on best practices for parent-teacher conferences. Principals should work with parent coordinators to establish procedures for parent visits to classrooms, and include those procedures in notices that schools send home. Those procedures should also be filed with the local district office. All notices should be translated in the home language of parents to ensure greater participation.

### **Parent-Teacher Conference Policy**

The parent-teacher conference dates listed in this communication are not intended to limit other types of meetings that take place between teachers and families throughout the school year. In addition to the dates listed below, the use of grade, class, guidance, and individual conferences, conferences between parents and school personnel, are excellent practices that should take place throughout the school year.

Schools should not deviate from the citywide dates for afternoon conferences listed below; doing so may create issues with transportation services. If individual parents have date and time conflicts, they should be encouraged to schedule a parent-teacher conference at a mutually agreed-upon time. To ensure maximum use of available instructional time, scheduling additional half days for parent-teacher conferences is not permitted. One afternoon parent-teacher conference date each semester is scheduled per school level. Schools receive conference day credit toward meeting the 180-day State instructional requirement. For purposes of the Period Attendance Report (PAR), all days scheduled for afternoon parent-teacher conferences should be recorded as instructional.

## **2011-12 Parent-Teacher Conference Dates**

### **Elementary Schools**

#### **Fall 2011**

\*Monday, November 14, 2011 – Evening  
Tuesday, November 15, 2011 – Afternoon

#### **Spring 2012**

\*Wednesday, March 14, 2012 – Evening  
Tuesday, March 13, 2012 – Afternoon

### **Intermediate and Junior High Schools**

#### **Fall 2011**

\*Wednesday, November 16, 2011 – Evening  
Thursday, November 17, 2011 – Afternoon

#### **Spring 2012**

\*Wednesday, February 29, 2012 – Evening  
Tuesday, February 28, 2012 – Afternoon

### **High Schools**

**Fall 2011**

\*Thursday, October 27, 2011 – Evening  
Friday, October 28, 2011 – Afternoon

**Spring 2012**

\*Thursday, March 29, 2012 – Evening  
Friday, March 30, 2012 – Afternoon

**\*\*District 75 School Programs****Fall 2011**

\*Wednesday, November 2, 2011 – Evening  
Thursday, November 3, 2011 – Afternoon

**Spring 2012**

\*Monday, March 19, 2012 – Evening  
Tuesday, March 20, 2012 – Afternoon

\*Schools may select dates for evening conferences that are different from those listed above. The date and time selected must be conducive to parent participation; conferences should not begin before 5:30 p.m. to accommodate most parents' work schedules. Afternoon dates should not be rescheduled.

Please note that a two-and-a-half-hour time period is required for evening conferences. Principals are reminded to request security coverage at least one week before evening conferences. For half day pre-kindergarten programs at public school sites, see the section below. Parents should be notified at least four weeks' prior to the conferences. Notices should be translated into languages represented in the school population.

\*\*District 75 school programs co-located with non-D75 schools should adhere to their co-located school's afternoon and evening parent-teacher conference dates as indicated above. Self-contained District 75 schools should follow schedule above for District 75 school programs.

**Note:** Schools that include grades with more than one instructional level (i.e., a k-8 or 6-12 school), should choose one of the citywide dates at either of the instructional levels of the student which it serves.

**Cancel Evening Activities on Thursday, October 27, 2011 and Thursday, March 29, 2012**

For high schools: adult and continuing education activities will be canceled in schools on the evenings conferences are held.

**Transportation Procedures for Students on Days of the Afternoon Conferences**

Two hours of school time are devoted to afternoon parent-teacher conferences at each school. Students are released early from school for this time period. Students will receive bus transportation in accordance with their dismissal schedules. Student dismissal should be three hours prior to what would have been the regular dismissal time for the day.

The Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) will handle arrangements with bus companies to pick up students on the shortened days, provided schools have followed the conference schedule listed above. While schools do not need to contact OPT, it is recommended that schools confirm with the bus drivers a few days prior to the scheduled shortened days. Principals should make appropriate arrangements regarding lunch schedules and ensure that parents are informed of any changes.

**Scheduling Half-day Pre-kindergarten Programs at Public School Sites**

The fall and spring terms should be equal in length for all students. On the fall term elementary school afternoon conference date, a.m. pre-kindergarten students should attend the morning session, while p.m. pre-kindergarten students should not be scheduled to attend school on that day. On the spring term elementary school afternoon conference date, p.m. pre-kindergarten program pupils should attend the morning session, while a.m. pre-kindergarten program pupils should not be scheduled to attend school on that day.

**Report on 2011-12 Parent-Teacher Conferences**

All reports should be submitted using this [online survey](#) by Friday, December 9, 2011, for the 2011 fall term report, and Friday, May 4, 2012, for the spring term report. Please contact Elisabeth McCall ([emccall2@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:emccall2@schools.nyc.gov)) in the Office for Family Information and Action with any questions.

**Have your Questions Answered:**

- For questions regarding pupil transportation of pre-kindergarten children, call (718) 482-3800. For all other transportation questions, schools should contact their CFN transportation liaison or OPT at (718) 392-8855.
- For questions around the Period Attendance Report (PAR) issues, Pupil Accounting Secretaries/attendance staff should contact their liaison in the PAR Unit.
- To better communicate with a limited- or non-English-speaking parent, school-based personnel should call the DOE translation unit at 718-752-7373 ext. 4 for over-the-phone interpretation services during afternoon and evening parent-teacher conferences. These services will be available until 8:30 pm on the evening conference dates.
- For all other questions regarding this document, please call (212) 374-2323.
- View the [translated report cards](#) for all grades.